



Congress of Connecticut Community Colleges

Service Employee International Union (SEIU) Local 1973 – “Stronger Together!”

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February 23, 2022

Senator Osten, Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Seth Freeman, and I am a Professor at Capital Community College and the President of the Congress of Connecticut Community Colleges (4Cs). Our union represents full and part-time faculty and staff at the twelve community colleges and adjuncts at the University of Hartford.

Today I am here to support our partners that are asking for mental health funding due largely to a lack of staffing and resources. This is not a problem that we are immune from at the community colleges. Our own Counseling and Wellness Centers are understaffed and struggle from a lack of resources, and some campuses rely on community partners to provide mental health services to our students.

Our community college students do not just show up at our campuses with their books and their backpacks; they carry their trauma with them. If our mental health structures on campus are understaffed and struggling, and our community partners are also understaffed at a time where there is such great need, we are going to lose an entire generation of students.

We ask you to expand the safety net for our students – we need early interventions, training, mental health care, in schools and in communities. Please direct more resources towards expanding the services that our communities need.

Thank you.

4Cs STAFF

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